

B^a

(b) comprising a replicable vector which confers immortality on a cell comprising same, and

(c) being free of mitochondrial DNA.

8. (Amended) A method for preparing a human immortalized cell line derived from a post-mitotic primary cell culture which comprises:

(a) providing a cell culture of human primary post-mitotic cells;

(b) providing a human fibroblast cell line which

B³

(i) has been transfected with a replicable nucleic acid vector which immortalizes the fibroblast cell line, and

(ii) has been depleted of its mitochondrial DNA;

(c) co-culturing the human fibroblast cell line of step (b) with the cell culture of step (a) under appropriate conditions so that cell fusion occurs;